

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-17 are pending in the present application.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-17 were rejected under nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as unpatentable over Claims 1-31 of U.S. Patent No. 6,741,239.

With respect to the rejections based on non-statutory double patenting, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-17 are patentably distinct from Claims 1-31 of U.S. Patent No. 6,741,239.

To expedite progress toward allowance, a Terminal Disclaimer is filed herewith. Thus, Applicant submits the outstanding rejections of the claims have been overcome.

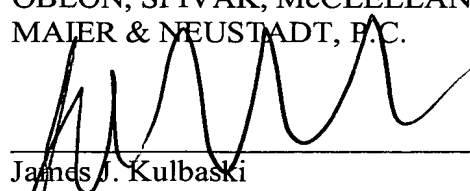
The filing of a Terminal Disclaimer to obviate a rejection based on nonstatutory double patenting is not an admission of the propriety of the rejection. The "filing of a Terminal Disclaimer simply serves the statutory function of removing the rejection of double patenting, and raises neither a presumption nor estoppel on the merits of the rejection." Quad Environmental Technologies Corp. v. Union Sanitary District, 946 F.2d 870, 20 U.S.P.Q.2d 1392 (Fed. Cir. 1991). Accordingly, Applicants filing of the attached disclaimer is provided for facilitating a timely resolution to prosecution only, and should not be interpreted as an admission as to the merits of the obviated rejection.

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Reply to Office Action of May 1, 2006

Consequently, in light of the above discussion, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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